

Message Text

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TAGS: MARR, NATO, SP, US

SUBJ: BASE NEGOTIATIONS AND NATO - PRIME MINISTER ARIAS'

COMMENTS

SUMMARY: SPANISH PRIME MINISTER ARIAS' RECENT COMMENTS TO NEWSWEEK'S ARNAUD DE BORCHGRAVE ON DEVELOPMENTS IN SPAIN HAVE BEEN REPORTED AS WELL BY THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE AND BY THE SPANISH PRESS. WHAT HE HAD TO SAY ON THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS AND NATO IS NOTEWORTHY IN THAT IT

(A) CONSTITUTES THE FIRST EXPLICIT PUBLIC STATEMENT BY A SENIOR GOS OFFICIAL IN THE MEMORY OF THOSE NOW AT THIS POST TO THE EFFECT THAT SPAIN WILL JOIN NATO IF INVITED;

(B) PUTS ON THE PUBLIC RECORD THE ESSENCE OF THE LATEST GOS REQUEST FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE UNDER THE AGREEMENT NOW BEING NEGOTIATED;

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(C) REFLECTS CONTINUITY WITHIN THE NEW GOVT OF THE

LINE STRESSED FOR SO LONG BY FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER CORTINA ON THE IMPORTANCE OF NATO'S RECOGNITION OF SPANISH CONTRIBUTIONS TO WESTERN DEFENSE, TOGETHER WITH THE THREAT THAT FURTHER DISCRIMINATION WOULD PRODUCE SPANISH INSISTENCE ON LIMITING THE USE BY THE US OF FACILITIES IN SPAIN TO STRICTLY US AND SPANISH NEEDS. END SUMMARY.

1. BEGIN TEXT:

"QUESTION--THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS ALSO CALLED FOR A "GESTURE OF REAL HELP" FROM THE UNITED STATES AND SAID THAT THE AGREEMENT ON UNITED STATES AIR AND NAVAL BASES IN SPAIN IS OPEN TO CORRECTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS. WHAT, SPECIFICALLY, DO YOU EXPECT THE UNITED STATES TO DO?

2. "ANSWER--CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, THE AGREEMENT WAS NOT WRAPPED UP BEFORE FRANCO'S DEATH. SOME DETAILS REMAIN. THE UNITED STATES SEEMS TO OVERLOOK THAT THESE FACILITIES, WHICH ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE NATO DETERRENT, NECESSITATE COSTLY PRECAUTIONARY MILITARY MEASURES, AS SPAIN IS NOT IN THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE AND ENJOYS NONE OF ITS BENEFITS--ONLY THE INCONVENIENCES. SO U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE WILL HAVE TO BE SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED.

3. "Q--FROM JUST OVER \$500 MILLION TO WHAT?

4. -A--DOUBLED AT THE VERY LEAST.

5. "Q--YOU HAVE ADVOCATED MILITARY COOPERATION WITH THE WESTERN WORLD. WHAT, SPECIFICALLY, DO YOU HAVE IN MIND?

6. "A--LET ME REMIND YOU THAT UNITED STATES BASES ARE NOT ONLY PART OF THE ALLIANCE'S DETERRENT BUT ALSO PART OF NATO'S INFRASTRUCTURE, UNDER THE COMMAND OF THE NATO SUPREME COMMANDER. WESTERN EUROPE'S SURVIVAL IS DEPENDENT ON THE U.S. DETERRENT AND THE BASES ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THAT DETERRENT. SO OUR COUNTRY HAS BEEN TOLERATING AN IRREGULAR SITUATION OUT OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE REST OF THE FREE WORLD. THE OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN TAKING ADVANTAGE OF OUR GEOPGRAPHY AND OF OUR ANTI-COMMUNISM WHILE IGNORING THE RIGHTS THAT IN ANY ALLIANCE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF FREE COUNTRIES WOULD BE OURS. THIS CANNOT CONTINUE. IT IS BOTH ILLOGICAL AND UNACCEPTABLE. AND IF IT CONTINUES, SPAIN WOULD HAVE TO CONCLUDE THAT IT HAS NO OBLIGATION WHATSOEVER TO EUROPE'S DEFENSE. THERE CANNOT BE ANY FURTHER DISCRIMINATION AGAINST SPAIN.

7. "Q-- AND IF THERE IS?

8. "A--EITHER EUROPE RECOGNIZES OUR ROLE AS THEIR NATURAL ALLY
OR SPAIN WILL HAVE TO LIMIT THE USE OF THE BASES STRICTLY TO
U.S. AND SPANISH NEEDS.

9. "Q--WOULD YOU JOIN NATO IF INVITED?

10. "A--OF COURSE. THAT WOULD ONLY BE NATURAL." END TEXT.
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